

Prevention of Sepsis Policy

Sepsis is the immune system's overreaction to an infection or injury where it attacks the body's organs and tissues. Sepsis claims an estimated 48,500 lives each year (The UK Sepsis Trust). It is rare for sepsis to develop from dental infections but can occur if patients are poorly managed. Spotting deterioration in a patient's condition can help prevent sepsis.

Symptoms of sepsis in adults include:

- altered mental state eg. Slurred speech or confusion
- malaise
- extreme shivering
- muscle pain
- failure to pass urine in the previous 18 hours
- breathlessness and increased breathing
- increased heart rate and blood pressure
- non-blanching rash and cyanosis of the skin, lips or tongue.

Signs of sepsis in children:

- Rapid breathing
- Convulsions
- Mottled, blue or pale appearance
- Lethargic and difficult to wake up
- A rash that doesn't fade when pressed
- Feels abnormally cold to touch

Signs of sepsis in infants:

- Not feeding
- Hasn't passed urine for 12 hours
- Vomiting repeatedly

Dental Infections:

The first treatment of choice for patients with acute dental infections, is removal of the source of infection by drainage. Antibiotics should only be prescribed:

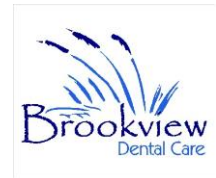
- As an adjunct to the management of acute infections where there is an elevated temperature, evidence of systemic spread and local lymph gland involvement
- For the definitive management of active infective disease eg. necrotising ulcerative gingivitis
- Where definitive treatment has to be delayed due to referral to specialist services for example when it has not been possible to establish drainage in an unco-operative patient or a patient needs referring because of co-morbidities.

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[Antimicrobial prescribing in dentistry – College of General Dentistry \(cgdent.uk\)](http://www.sdcep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/SDCEP-Drug-Prescribing-for-Dentistry-3rd-edition.pdf)

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Patients with acute infections should be followed up in 2-3 days to ensure that their symptoms have improved and referred to the local A&E at any point that sepsis is suspected.

CQC may ask what processes and systems are in place to manage patients with infections. They may also ask to see the record of a patient who has presented with severe infection, as evidence of how a practice deals with such cases.

For further information see the Sepsis Trust Yellow manual:

<https://sepsistrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Yellow-Manual-6th-Edition.pdf>

SEPSIS

**IS A RARE BUT SERIOUS COMPLICATION
OF AN INFECTION**

**If your child has any of these symptoms
you should take immediate action:**

- Looks mottled, bluish or pale
- Is very lethargic or difficult to wake
- Feels abnormally cold to touch
- Is breathing very fast
- Has a rash that does not fade when you press it
- Has a fit or convulsion

Acting quickly could save your child's life. If your child has any of these symptoms, don't be afraid to go to **A&E immediately or **call 999**.**

For more information visit nhs.uk/sepsis
or sepsistrust.org

